



CITY OF STOCKTON

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

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VIA FACSIMILE and U.S. MAIL

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State of California Department of Water Resources
South Delta Branch, Draft EIS/EIR Comments
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CITY OF STOCKTON COMMENTS TO DRAFT EIS/EIR SOUTH DELTA IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (SDIP)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIS/EIR. This document is presently inadequate in numerous areas as described below. Generally we are concerned with the operation of the barriers in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 scenarios and the subsequent water quality impacts in the San Joaquin River downstream of the Head of Old River in the vicinity of Stockton. Our specific comments are as follows:

1. 1-30 Effects of Water Quality in the South Delta

This Section misstates the problem. Increased exports will have a deleterious impact on dissolved oxygen (DO) at the Stockton Deep Water Ship Channel (DWSC). Increased pumping without the Head of Old River Barrier (HORB) operated in a closed position will allow more water to go down Old River towards the export pumps and less water to arrive at the Stockton DWSC. This is especially true in Below Normal, Dry, and Critical water years in July, August and September. If the HORB is open and 100% of the San Joaquin River flow is going to the export pumps, then little or no flow is reaching the Stockton DWSC. This lack of flow at the DWSC is due to export pumping and in-Delta diversions. The SDIP EIS/EIR does not propose how DWR and USBR will mitigate for the SDIP's effects on DO.

The SWRCB recently adopted a TMDL for DO. Does the EIS/EIR modeling of indicate how the DWR and the USBR will meet their share of the load allocation under the DO TMDL?

Is the SDIP subject to approval and permitting by the CVRWQCB on this issue?



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2. 2-2 **Operational Component**

How is the operation of the SDIP consistent with the Napa Agreement? Please describe the Napa Agreement or those sections of the Napa Agreement that are analyzed as part of this EIR/EIS.

3. 2-4, 5 **Decision Stages**

Stage 1 is to be the decision of whether to continue the temporary barrier or install the permanent barriers. Decision making for stage 2 will begin after the stage 1 decision. Where is the decision for the interim operations described on page 2-2?

4. 2-30 **Summer and Fall**

The EIS/EIR should consider an operation with the HORB gates closed in July, August, and September to improve the San Joaquin River flow through the Stockton DWSC.

The EIS/EIR requires two criteria to be met before considering gate operations at other times for longer periods of time. Based on the second criteria, the HORB gate will never be shut in July and August and some Septembers to improve DO in the DWSC. Salmon and steelhead do not out-migrate from the San Joaquin River in those months.

This is a major flaw in the SDIP. The SDIP will result in more water flowing down Old River from the increased pumping and causing further degradation in the Stockton DWSC.

5. Table 4.1

WQ-13: We strongly disagree with your analysis. If the export pumps are above their current pumping levels in July, August, September and October during low flow years such as Below Normal, Dry and Critical, then more water will go down Old River and less water will go down the San Joaquin River. This will exacerbate the DO problem in the Stockton DWSC. This is especially true given the fact that the HORB gates will not be closed.

WQ-27: Same comment as above.

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6. 5.3-1 **Introduction**

The Introduction states that salinity downstream of the Head of Old River at Brandt Bridge will not change substantially from Vernalis and is dependent upon the salinity at Vernalis. Brandt Bridge is a D-1641 compliance point and at a minimum the EIS/EIR should show the analysis to support the statement. Agricultural drainage and other inflows between Vernalis and Brandt Bridge may not change the salinity at the lower compliance point irrespective of the SDIP but this must be shown.

The EIS/EIR did not assess salinity or other water quality effects downstream of Brandt Bridge. Why were other locations not assessed? The EIS/EIR did not assess the water quality effects of the SDIP near the proposed intake location for the Stockton Delta Water Supply Project. These effects must be evaluated.

7. 5.3-13 **San Joaquin River and South Delta Salinity**

That last sentence states that San Joaquin River flows will not change due to SDIP and therefore would not affect the EC values. However, Table 5.1-12 shows an average *increase* in CVP deliveries of up to 107,000 acre-feet. The EIS/EIR did not evaluate the effects of importing this additional water and the salt that comes with it to the valley each year.

8. 10-5 **Section 10.3**

The Stockton Delta Water Supply Project is not evaluated under the cumulative impact assessment. The EIR for this project was certified on November 8, 2005, and a water right permit was issued on December 20, 2005. The SDIP EIS/EIR needs to evaluate the environmental effects with the Delta Water Supply Project in place.

Because of these defects, the Draft EIS/EIR should be redrafted and re-circulated for public review and comment to adequately assess the impacts as stated above.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft EIS/EIR document.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (209) 937-8700.


for MARK J. MADISON
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MJM:RLG:as

cc: Art Godwin: Mason, Robbins, Gnass and Browning